and Pakistan. Regular air communications are maintained to Iraq and Arabia, and the airport on Muharraq Island also serves international airlines with terminals in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. Motor roads connect the towns and the villages on the different islands, and extend across causeways from Bahrain to Muharraq and Sitra. The local transport facilities are well developed, and motor bus routes link most of the population centers.

Food and Nutrition

The food habits of the diverse racial groups are varied, but serious undernutrition is seldom encountered, except among the migratory laborers from the mainland and the Baharna and Arabs in the agricultural and the fishing villages. The islands are dependent upon imports for a large proportion of their food supply. The government controls certain essential foodstuffs, as wheat, rice and sugar, and regulates prices through a system of rationing.

The diet of the average Bahraini consists of dates, bread, rice and fish, supplemented by native vegetables in season and limited amounts of meat and milk. Goats are raised in many villages, though their milk is usually scanty and poor in quality. Most of the meat is imported from Iran, and is correspondingly expensive. An assortment of fruits and vegetables is generally obtainable in Manama markets by those who are able to purchase them.

Housing

Manama is a cosmopolitan town, and the changes which have come about within the last two decades are reflected in the construction of increasing numbers of modern-type dwellings. Muharraq, in contrast, is a distinctly Arab community. Coral blocks, coral slabs and plaster are the usual building materials in the older houses, while cement is used extensively in the newer buildings. The typical Arab-style homes are built around inner courts and have utilitarian

occurred intermittently in the past, chiefly in Manama and Muharraq. The islands are exposed to the introduction of the disease from neighboring territories, but the enforcement of quarantine regulations has prevented its establishment for several decades.

Other Infections. Although a mild degree of louse infestation occurs among the inhabitants in some congested areas, louse-borne typhus is rarely, if ever, reported. Imported cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis, or Oriental sore, and filariasis are occasionally treated in the local medical institutions, but the insect vectors are not known to be present, and indigenous infections have not been recorded. Guinea worm infection is sometimes seen among persons from Iran, but it is not found in the resident population.

Nutritional Diseases

The standards of nutrition have improved materially in the last few years. Undernutrition is common, but serious defects are seen primarily among the inhabitants of outlying villages and the families of workers from the mainland. Poverty, traditional dietary customs and intestinal parasitism are contributory factors. Subclinical deficiencies in vitamin C are widespread, and scurvy is observed from time to time. Rickets is frequent among the children in the towns. Anemia is prevalent, and hemoglobin levels of 25 to 30 per cent are not unusual among the women.

SUMMARY

Bahrain is an independent sheikhdom which consists of an archipelago of 5 main islands situated in the Persian Gulf near the coast of Arabia. It has long been famous as a pearl fishing center, and, since 1932, has enjoyed prosperity as an oil-producing area. It has a heterogeneous population which numbered 109,650 in 1950, including 18,471 foreigners. The people are predominantly of mixed Arab and Persian origin, and about 96 per cent are Moslems.

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